The Community Development Connection

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APRIL 26, 2013

Community Development Department Town of Amherst



New Fee Schedules!

Inside this issue: Regulatory Review Update Round II Grant Award 2 Regional Community Conversation Meeting Updates 3 NRPC Regional Plan Update

File Cabinet Donations Welcome!

If you have functional file cabinets, that will hold 8.5"x11" files not in use any more we would love to give them a new home.

Just call the Office!

The Community Development Department's fee schedule is set by the Board of Selectmen (last updated in January 2012). The previous fee schedule was derived from a fee study completed in 2004, at which time Amherst's fees were reported as the lowest in the region. Since 2004 the Town has steadily increased fees each time a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was adopted by the Board of Selectmen.

In response to significant comments from the community that Amherst's fees appeared to be unreasonably high, Staff completed a new fee study including Building,

Town of Amberst, New Hampshire Office of Community Development	
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BUILDING FEE SCHEDULE	
Building Permit Fees:	
Residential Administrative Fee	
Electrical Plumbino	
Construction/Alteration	
Non-hosted Structure	
Certificate of Occupancy	
Commercial / Industrial Administrative Fee	F100
Flatrical	
Plumbing	
Construction/Alteration	
Non-houted Structure	
Teneral Fit-Up*	
Certificate of Occupancy	
Other Permits:	
Mechanical Permits	See Fire Department Fee Schedule
Swimming Pools:	
In-ground.	
Above-Ground	\$70
Signs:	
1-15 sf	
16-30 sf	
30+ sf	
Home Occupation Permit	
Septic Systems New or Replacement	\$100
Septic Tank Only	
	363
Refunds and Penalties:	
	Total fee less 20%
Penalty for Work without Permits	
Re-inspection Fee	
Copy and Scan Fees:	
Plan Copius (24" x 36")	
Scan Copies of Plans	
8: x 11" Copies	
11" x 17" Copies	
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"No face will be charged for applications with " if the ap-	
"No fees will be charged for applications with " if the ap mocess as well. Fees apply only for independent applica	

Planning, and Zoning fee schedules for comparable communities. The fee study indicated that in many cases Amherst's fees were the highest and in some cases significantly higher than any of the other twelve communities for Planning Board, Zoning Board, and Building Permit fees.

In response to the study's findings, the Board of Selectmen recently approved a new fee schedule to be effective May 1, 2013, reducing many of the fees. The new fee schedule is a first step in bringing Amherst's fees closer to comparable communities. Please check out the Forms, Permits, and Fees page on the website for the new fee schedule. The results of the Fee Study have also been posted online for the curious. If you have questions, please let us know!

Did You Know—Scenic Roads?

As a private property owner, even on a Scenic Road, you have the right to trim and remove trees on your property per RSA 231:158, IV which reads: "Designation of a road as a scenic road shall not affect the rights of any landowner with respect to work on his own property, except to the extent that trees have been acquired by the municipality as shade or ornamental trees pursuant to RSA 231:139-156, and except that RSA 472:6 limits the removal or alteration of boundary markers including stone walls."

The scenic road statue was originally enacted in 1971 as a tool for Planning Boards, Road Agents, and municipalities. At that time, the State made annual appropriations to municipalities for roadway infrastructure maintenance, which came with the requirement that roads be built to state roadway design standards including specifica-



tions on width of pavement and shoulders, allowable slopes, curve radii and drainage. (continued on p.2)

Did You Know-Scenic Roads?

(continued from p.1) To avoid the necessity of implementing significant roadway widening projects, especially in areas of limited right-of-way, the Scenic Road Statute was created. As initially intended, the statute gave Road Agents the ability to accept and utilize State improvement funds without meeting the mandated roadway design standards, if the Planning Board denied the removal of trees or disturbance of stonewalls in the right-of-way of a scenic road. The statue allowed municipalities the flexibility to maintain their beautiful older roadways with limited pavement and more extreme slopes or curve radii than would have otherwise been allowed, but was never contemplated to limit the rights of a private landowner from maintaining their property.

The statute has evolved since its adoption with several revisions, the last in 1992; however, it still protects a landowner's right to cut trees on their own property. The statue requires municipalities and utility companies to seek Planning Board public hearing approval prior to the removal of trees or disturbance of stonewalls within the right-of-way except in extreme situations. For the full text of the Scenic Road statute see RSA 231:157-158.



Round II Community Planning Grant Update

In March 2013, the Town of Amherst and was awarded a grant of \$29,300 to combine and update with current Best Management Practices (BMP's) the Watershed Protection District and the Wetlands Protection District, in order to protect the high quality drinking water and watershed of the Town of Amherst and the region. The revision to these ordinances will be an important contribution to protecting the Town's and Region's natural resources from degradation, as a majority of the Town's Commercial and Industrial zoned land is undeveloped or underdeveloped, and sits atop one of the State's highest quality aquifers.

This project will kick off in May; the Town has reopened its search for responses to the Request For Qualifications, and the RFQ is posted on the Town website and the Citizen Planner website through May 3rd, 2013. For more information on this project and the grant please contact the Community Development Office.

Regulatory Review Update

The Planning Board at their April 17th public meeting accepted the Regulatory Review document and associated appendix information. The final document is now on the <u>Special Projects</u> page of the website.

This project was funded by a Round I Community Planning Grant with the goal of:

- Analyzing existing land use ordinances and regulations for consistency with the 2010 Master Plan goals and priority actions, and the NH Livability Principles; and
- Analyzing the six water resource related ordinances to simplify, combine, and update with best management practices to protect Amherst and the region's high quality drinking water and watershed.

The Regulatory Review is intended as a first step advisory document for the Town's Planning Board and associated stake-holder groups to aid in prioritizing and developing amendments to the land use regulations that meet the goals of the 2010 Master Plan and protect our high quality water resources and watersheds.

The document was an essential component of the community's application for a Round 2 Community Planning Grant (awarded in March, 2013) to begin implementation of the recommended changes.

Meeting Results:



Each month this column will bring you a quick update on the results of the Zoning Board, Planning Board, and Historic District Commission's deliberations:

Zoning Board (ZBA)

The ZBA continued their hearings from last month: one new case and five rehearings in March. The continued meetings were held on April 2nd and April 15th. No new applications were submitted for the month of April:

New Business (continued from March 26th):

1. Case #3826 - Variance: The applicant, Stacy J. Clark, PIN# 001-013-000, 131 Hollis Road (Rte. 122), requests a variance to use the existing two-story building as business offices with a portion of the building being used for residential purposes for an indefinite period of time in the Residential/Rural Zone.

The application was denied on April 2nd.

2a. Rehearing: Case# 3849 - Variance: The applicant, Brad Knight, owner of Map 4, Lot 65-1, 12 Stearns Road, Residential Rural Zone, is requesting a variance from Article IV, Sections 4.3.1, Permitted Uses, of the Amherst Zoning Code to allow commercial recreation, sports and events facility with seasonal lighting in the Residential Rural Zone.

The public hearing was tabled to April 30th at 7:00pm in the Barbara Landry Meeting Room at Town Hall.

2b. Rehearing Case# 3850 - Variance: The applicant, Brad Knight, owner of Map 4, Lot 65-1, 12 Stearns Road, Residential Rural Zone, is requesting a variance from Article IV, 4.10.5, Floodplain Conservation District, Permitted Uses, of the Amherst Zoning Code to allow commercial recreation, sports, and events facility with seasonal lighting in the Flood Plain Conservation District.

The public hearing was tabled to April 30th at 7:00pm in the Barbara Landry Meeting Room at Town Hall.

2c. Rehearing Case# 3851 - Variance: The applicant, Brad Knight, owner of Map 4, Lot 65-1, 12 Stearns Road, Residential Rural Zone, is requesting a variance from Article IV, Section 4.11.2, Wetland Conservation District Permitted Uses of the Amherst Zoning Code to allow for a commercial recreation, sports, and events facility with seasonal lighting in the Wetland Conservation District.

The public hearing was tabled to April 30th at 7:00pm in the Barbara Landry Meeting Room at Town Hall.

2d. Rehearing Case# 3852 - Variance: The applicant, Brad Knight, owner of Map 4, Lot 65-1, 12 Stearns Road, Residential Rural Zone, is requesting a variance from Article IV, Section 4.12.2 Watershed Protection District, Permitted Uses of the Amherst Zoning Code to allow for a commercial recreation, sports, and events facility with seasonal lighting in the Watershed Protection District.

The public hearing was tabled to April 30th at 7:00pm in the Barbara Landry Meeting Room at Town Hall.

2e. Rehearing Case # 3853 - Variance: The applicant, Brad Knight, owner of Map 4, Lot 65-1, 12 Stearns Road, Residential Rural Zone, is requesting a variance from Article IV, Section 4.13.3 Aquifer Conservation District, Permitted Uses of the Amherst Zoning Code to allow for a commercial recreation, sports, and events facility with seasonal lighting.

The public hearing was tabled to April 30th at 7:00pm in the Barbara Landry Meeting Room at Town Hall. (continued on p. 4)

Meeting Results (continued)

Planning Board (PB)

The PB held a Scenic Road hearing and heard two applications at the regular meeting. The regular meeting was followed by a worksession to discuss the proposed CIP Timeline and scope. More information on the CIP can be found on the Special Projects page:

1. **Town of Amherst – Lyndeborough Rd:** To remove ten trees on Lyndeborough Rd, east of Carol Ann Lane to allow for the relocation of two utility poles on Lyndeborough Rd.

The application was approved as presented by DPW Director Bruce Berry.

2. PZ3880 – Amended Subdivision Plan Land of Donald W. Comstock Revocable Trust – County Road – Donald W. & Donna L. Comstock – PIN #004-117-000, 004-117-001, 004-117-002, and 004-117-003: To allow a paved surface on the common and individual driveways for the four lots in the Residential/Rural Zone..

The application was approved as presented to modify a note on the plan to include the option of either gravel or paved driveway and a private way to serve the previously subdivide lots.

3. PZ3882 – Stacy J. Clark – 131 Hollis Road (NH Route 122) – PIN #001-013-000: To subdivide into three residential buildings lots in the Residential/Rural Zone, Aquifer Conservation District, Public Water Protection Wetlands, Watershed Protection District, and Wetland Conservation District.

The application was approved to subdivide the existing residential lot into three residential lots, with the conditions: The Conservation Commission supplied Wetlands Buffer signs shall be installed at 50' intervals along the edge of the wetlands buffer for all three lots, and a note be added to the property deeds stating "There is a Public Watershed Protection Wetland on the property which requires a naturally vegetated buffer be maintained 100' from the edge of wetlands."

Historic District Commission (HDC)

The HDC had a site walk on Saturday, April 13th for Case #3925 at 17 Foundry Street. The meeting on April 18th included two discussions and two regular applications.

1. Discussion of Town Hall Repairs – DPW Director Bruce Berry and Glen Dodge of Dodgeco Inc.

Commission unanimously voted to approve the use of the materials as presented with the understanding that if any changes to the plan need to be made, he needs to comes back to the Commission first. Further, if ventilation and sheetrock and panels and insulation change, he needs to come back to the Commission for discussion as well.

2. Case #3920 – 12 Middle Street, PIN #017-097-000 – Rolf Biggers and Dave Hall for window replacement with Pella, Architect Series, all wood SDL windows because of failed frames and deterioration.

The application was approved as presented to replace the windows with Pella, Architect Series (or equivalent) all wood SDL windows with the condition that the glass in the windows be made of clear glass.

3. Case #3925 – 17 Foundry Street, PIN #017-035-000 – Jed Barker to remove Pine tree, pave driveway, repair porch, and landscape front yard.

The application was approved as presented to remove the tree with no replacement required, approved the driveway materials and form, and approves the porch repair in kind, with the condition that the applicant return to the HDC once a decision has been made on what to do with the lattice work area around the bottom of the porch.

4. Discussion on Discontinuance of Middle Street - Tori Burke - A section between Main Street and School Street

The Commission should make a request to the Board of Selectmen to take a comprehensive study of the traffic in the Village and make traffic calming suggestions and let the Courthouse Road "Do Not Enter" sign come down.

Community Development Department Town of Amherst

2 Main Street PO Box 960 Amherst, NH 03031

Phone: 603.673.6041 Fax: 603.673.4138 E-mail: smarchant@amherstnh.gov



WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.AMHERSTNH.GOV

The Community Development Office strives to effectively manage community change in accordance with the Master plan and the Town's ordinances and regulations, by providing professional advice and technical expertise in a consistent and fair manner to citizens, boards and commissions, departments, and regional agencies on the implementation of land use ordinances, regulations, and policies for both the short and long term physical, natural, and economic development of the Town.

The Community Development Office is comprised of the Building, Zoning, Planning, Code Enforcement, and Economic Development Departments. The Office provides support to the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Amherst Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Heritage Commission, and the CIP Committee. The office provides a one-stop location for all land development processing in the Town.



NRPC UPDATE



April 30th Join us for a Community Conversation!

The NRPC is hosting a Regional Community Conversation on Tuesday, April 30, from 6 to 9 PM at the Nashua Senior Center at 70 Temple Street. This is one of the important community input sessions for our regional plan so it is critical that we have a good turn out and a broad representation of people from across the region attend this event.

<u>Please register to attend today!</u> It is important to register so that we know how many facilitators to plan to have at the event, that you can receive the discussion guide in advance and any other relevant updates.

Please share this invitation to your network of boards, commissions, friends, neighbors, colleagues and other organizations you belong to. The ideal person is anyone that lives, works, learns, or plays in the Nashua region or has an interest in the generations who will do so in the future. We want to hear what they think is important for maintaining the vibrant communities that we have in our region and ideas for how to best prepare for our future.

To register, click on the link above or call 603-862-0692.

Please note that **refreshments and on-site childcare** will be available. Directions to the Nashua Senior Center are here: http://

www.nashuaseniorcenter.org/about/ the-facility/directions/.

We look forward to seeing you on April 30!

a Regional Planning Commission to post a blog article. All ideas are welcome.

Commute Green NH Week

The Commute Green NH Coalition (CGNH) is a partnership of groups dedicated to encouraging and assisting people to choose "green" transportation options rather than driving alone. Green transportation includes carpooling, transit, bicycling, walking or telecommuting for commuting purposes.

CGNH is offering an opportunity for you to influence the advancement of multimodal transportation in New Hampshire through your participation in a very brief survey. Your input will be used to guide strategic decisions about transportation alternatives in New Hampshire.

Please visit http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ JOPYW37 to complete the survey. You may also contact Matt Waitkins for additional information at: mattw@nashuarpc.org